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Letter dated 6 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions of my Government, I enclose herewith the statement of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on the 30th anniversary of the Sumgait pogroms (see annex I) and the statement of the National Assembly of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) on the 30th anniversary of the massacre of the Armenian population of Sumgait (see annex II), both of which were adopted on 28 February 2018.

Thirty years have passed since the anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait, an Azerbaijani city the name of which has become to many Armenians an embodiment of horror, mass atrocities and dehumanizing crimes.

The pogroms perpetrated in Sumgait from 27 to 29 February 1988, mark the beginning of massacres and ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population, carried out subsequently in the cities of Baku, Kirovabad and other settlements in Soviet Azerbaijan, as well as in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The premeditated massacre in Sumgait was the reaction of Azerbaijan to the legitimate, constitutional, democratic and peaceful process in the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Those atrocities were the very reason that prompted the late Nobel Peace Prize laureate Andrei Sakharov to assert that, "even if some doubted it before Sumgait, no one sees a moral opportunity to insist on the territorial unity of Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan after this tragedy happened". On 7 July 1988, the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the massacres in Sumgait.

Azerbaijan's attempts to conceal those atrocities are a shameful manifestation of denial and failure to assume responsibility. The authorities of Azerbaijan spare no effort to obscure and manipulate facts and to shield the masterminds and perpetrators of the atrocities against the Armenian population of Sumgait. The joint statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Prosecutor General's Office of Azerbaijan of 22 February 2018 on the so-called investigation into the Armenian pogroms in the city of Sumgait, the content of which represents outright absurdity, is at the same time a blatant whitewash of the acts of the then leadership of Azerbaijan. It is also a stark

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manifestation of the policy of anti-Armenian hatred and xenophobia, which has become the modus operandi of Azerbaijan since 1988.

It is this kind of anti-Armenian propaganda that has incited continuous atrocities against Armenians, including the gross violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by the armed forces of Azerbaijan during the aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh in April 2016. The cultivation of hatred and xenophobia against Armenians has become a consistent practice in Azerbaijan. Reputable international bodies, including from within the United Nations and the Council of Europe, have consistently reported such policies.

Today, we pay tribute to the memory of the innocent victims of Sumgait and resolutely condemn any manifestation of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance. We also pay tribute to those individual Azerbaijanis who had not succumbed to anti-Armenian hysteria and risked their lives by rescuing their Armenian neighbours.

I kindly request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I to the letter dated 6 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia on the 30th anniversary of the Sumgait pogroms

Acknowledging that 30 years ago the Sumgait pogroms were planned and perpetrated by the Azerbaijani authorities, and were yet another manifestation of Azerbaijan's consistent policy of extradition and extermination of the Armenian people from its cradle, which has commenced with the establishment of Azerbaijan in 1918 through the massacres of Armenians, particularly in Baku — 30,000 (1918) and Shushi — 20,000 (1920), then continued in the Soviet era through the forcible eviction of Armenians of Nakhijevan and other regions, as well as repressions against the Armenians of Artsakh; that this process gained momentum, particularly, with the massacres committed against the Armenians in Sumgait, Baku and Gandzak (Kirovabad) from 1988 to 1991, and, since 1991, with the large-scale aggression against Artsakh, involving thousands of mercenaries, closely related to the international terrorist organizations, the ethnic cleansings and deportations of 22 Armenian villages through "Koltso" (Ring) military operation in 1991, killings of elderly, women and children living in Maragha village of Artsakh in 1992, the occupation and de-Armenization of the Shahumyan region and part of Martakert region in 1992, killing of the population of the town of Khojaly near Aghdam committed by the Azerbaijani armed groups with the aim of using it for the internal power struggle in Azerbaijan and attributing it to the Armenians, the glorification of those who committed crimes against Armenians, disseminating of anti-Armenian hatred and intolerance, the annihilation of the Armenian historical-cultural heritage, falsification of history, violation of the 1994–1995 trilateral ceasefire agreements, which have no time limitation, and subversive penetrations, killing of peaceful population and the military personnel, targeted bombings of civilian infrastructure, the new large-scale aggression against Artsakh in April 2016, which was accompanied with the gross violations of the international humanitarian law, namely, killings of children, women and elderly, mutilation of corpses of soldiers, beheadings of captured Armenian soldiers in the style of terrorist groups,

Acknowledging the fact, that in response to the peaceful demands of the people of Artsakh, who were under threat of ethnic cleansing, de-Armenization and physical extermination, to realise, in accordance with the norms and principles of international law and in line with the existing at that time legislation, one of the fundamental principles of international law, namely, the equality and self-determination of peoples, the Azerbaijani authorities perpetrated anti-Armenian violence, pogroms and deportations, accompanied with the extreme anti-Armenian state-sponsored propaganda, which has made the existence of Armenians in Azerbaijan impossible,

Stating that the Azerbaijani authorities, opposing the efforts of the international community and the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, undermine the negotiation process on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and continue to rely on the use of force and threat of force,

The National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia

Condemns the massive violence, murders and deportations of peaceful population by Azerbaijan, as well as the Armenophobic, racist policy and the aggressive military actions unleashed against Nagorno-Karabakh;

Commemorates the innocent victims of Azerbaijani crimes against Armenians;

Calls on the Parliaments and the Parliamentary Assemblies, the international organizations and human rights bodies:

– ***to condemn*** the committed and ongoing atrocities of Azerbaijan against the peaceful population as well as the violations of the humanitarian law which threaten not only the Armenian people, but also the security, stability and development of the whole region;

– ***to undertake*** practical steps to prevent them.

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Annex II to the letter dated 6 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

National Assembly of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh)

Statement on the 30th anniversary of the massacre of the Armenian population of Sumgait

On 27–29 February 1988, atrocities against and forced deportation of the Armenian population was carried out by the Azerbaijani authorities in Sumgait, just 30 kilometers from Baku. Hundreds of Armenians, mostly women, children and elderly people, fell victim to a pre-planned massacre; thousands of Armenians were forcibly deported and their property — plundered.

The crime committed in Sumgait was another manifestation of the policy of discrimination, ethnic cleansing and expulsion of Armenian people, which, following the example of Nakhichevan, was carried out with impunity by the Azerbaijani authorities during the Soviet period. It later continued in Baku, Gandzak (Kirovabad) and other Armenian settlements of Northern Artsakh. By these atrocities, the Baku authorities threatened the Artsakh Armenians who stood to defend their rights, and keeping the Armenians of Eastern Transcaucasia as a hostage.

Meanwhile, the national liberation struggle that was unfolding in Artsakh in those days was called to put an end to the infringements of national dignity of the Armenian people and the genocidal policy of the Azerbaijani authorities.

Paying tribute to the memory of the innocent Armenians who fell victim to the genocide in Sumgait and being convinced that the impunity for the pogroms and massacre of the Armenian population organized at state level led to new crimes and a war by Azerbaijan against the people of the newly independent Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, the National Assembly of the Artsakh Republic:

condemns any manifestation of discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance;

believes that official Baku continues to pursue a policy of genocide, the latest evidence of which were crimes committed against the civilian population of Artsakh in April 2016;

reaffirms that the Artsakh Republic will be consistent in restoring and protecting the rights of Azerbaijani Armenians who were exposed to violence and deportation;

urges parliamentary structures and international human rights organizations, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of mass pogroms and atrocities against the Armenian population of Sumgait, to condemn the genocidal acts committed by Baku against the Armenians of Azerbaijan.

28 February 2018
Stepanakert